

Act of 1998" should help bring the successful resolution and closure to the Lorton property.

AUTHORIZING THE GSA TO DISPOSE OF THE LORTON CORRECTIONAL COMPLEX IN VIRGINIA,
H.R. 4523

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 1998

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to join my Virginia colleagues TOM DAVIS and JIM MORAN in sponsoring important legislation which will allow the General Services Administration (GSA) to dispose of the Lorton Correctional Complex in Virginia.

Last month Virginia Governor Jim Gilmore announced that the Commonwealth of Virginia and the District of Columbia had agreed to finally close Lorton and relocate the remaining prisoners to privately run facilities around the state. This, Mr. Speaker, is good news for Virginia and the remaining occupants of the prison.

Mr. Speaker, over the years conditions at Lorton have gone from bad to worse. With chronic overcrowding, inmate idleness, widespread drug use, inadequate education and training programs and increasing violence, Lorton has become a "finishing school" for criminals. The situation has grown so bad, Mr. Speaker, that the Federal Bureau of Investigation has agents inside the prison to investigate only the crimes taking place within the prison.

With the closure of Lorton, inmates will be distributed to sites around the state that offer more opportunities such as training and education. An inmate who gains a skill or learns a trade is better prepared to live a life without crime upon his or her release. Recidivism, a major problem at Lorton, will hopefully drop.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, the neighbors of Lorton will no longer have to sit up nights worrying about escapes. Instead, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors has unanimously agreed upon a plan that provides for a recreational use on most of the property. This bill establishes the framework by which the process will be undertaken. I lend it my support and urge the House's approval.

DEPARTMENTS OF COMMERCE, JUSTICE, AND STATE, AND JUDICIARY, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. ESTEBAN EDWARD TORRES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 4, 1998

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4276) making appropriations for the Department of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes.

Mr. TORRES. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the amendment by Congresswoman JACKSON-LEE to increase funding for the Community Relations Service (CRS).

At a time when our nation continues to see the damaging effects of racial tensions, gang violence and hate crimes, the demand for skilled professionals trained in conflict mediation has reached a new height. We must acknowledge the services this division of the Department of Justice has brought to mayors, chiefs of police, school superintendents and concerned citizens of the community. In my home City of Los Angeles, the Community Relations Service played a vital role in resolving the week-long turmoil of the LA riots in the Spring of 1992. The recent events in Jasper, Texas proved another opportunity to employ these trained professionals to resolve conflict and prevent further tensions from rising. Without their interventions, the unresolved tensions of these conflicts will fester and could continue indefinitely, breeding further hate and violence.

I believe all of my colleagues here can agree that our efforts to alleviate violence in schools and communities is not something we should choose to ignore. This is not an example of a duplicated Federally funded program. This is the only Federal agency working to provide this type of assistance in times of need and attempt to prevent further outbreaks of violence and hate crimes. The demand for these services is growing and the Community Relations Service has proven itself successful in what has been deemed the most efficient and desirable approach to conflict resolution. Yet, at the current funding level CRS is unable to meet the demand for such services. Last year, the CRS was forced to decline 40 percent of all the requests for assistance that they received.

We hear members on the other side of the aisle speaking of a more efficient government. The CRS is an example of not only an efficient agency, but one that is cost effective. We can choose to help resolve conflict or we can pay the price of the crimes and convictions that will inevitably follow. I say we must meet the need for this demand and fully fund the CRS.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the Jackson-LEE amendment.

IN CELEBRATION OF THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF MIDDLETOWN, NEW YORK

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 1998

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to call the attention of my colleagues to the 150th anniversary of the Grace Episcopal Church of Middletown, NY.

For one hundred and fifty years the Wardens, Vestry and Parishioners of Grace Episcopal Church have served the community of Middletown, bringing neighbors, friends and the community as a whole together. The church has been instrumental in the development of Middletown, helping to educate and fill the spiritual needs of residents and families throughout the region.

The Grace Episcopal Church is a truly remarkable organization, built in 1847 and consecrated in 1848 by Bishop William Heathcote Delancey of Western New York. However, it was Elisha Wheeler, who came to Middletown

as a result of the Erie Railroad, who was largely responsible for creating Grace Episcopal Church. He was a signer of the Act of Incorporation, the first Junior Warden, then Senior Warden for the rest of his life.

In 1845, after much deliberation, land was purchased to erect a church on North Street, its current location. It is now the second oldest church building still in use in Middletown. The first church service was held on Christmas Eve, 1847.

Grace Church strives to be involved in the life of the community and social outreach, as well as trying to increase and strengthen its inreach to the members of the parish. The diversity of the members of this parish is a source of pride to its members and is one of the reasons that people of varying backgrounds can feel welcome there.

Beyond its normal parish duties, the church provides a soup kitchen, a RENT (Relief from Eviction for Needy Tenants) program, and A Place of Grace, Inc., which was formed to help those living with HIV/AIDS. These are only a few of the programs which has made the Grace Episcopal Church an active part of Middletown's community.

Mr. Speaker, I join our community in extending my congratulations to the church councils, and its congregation for the 150th anniversary of their reputable and noteworthy church. I would also like to take this opportunity to invite my colleagues to join with me in recognizing the great contributions of the Grace Episcopal Church in Middletown, NY.

RETIREMENT OF JUDGE FRANK ARNOLD

HON. MARION BERRY

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 1998

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Judge Frank Arnold. Judge Arnold has served as county judge in Sharp County, Arkansas and will retire this year after two decades.

Judge Arnold is a unique individual who I have had the opportunity to get to know over the last 10 years. He is a wonderful man who would give you the shirt off his back if you asked him to. Judge Arnold is one of those pillars of the community that works hard every day, plays by the rules and does whatever is necessary to make the community successful. He has been a loyal friend and support of me and is a true politician's politician. Judge Arnold has also been a tireless advocate of seniors, education, children, and industrial development in Arkansas. When you come to the Sharp County line, the roads are wider and smoother, the people are happier and life is better because of Frank Arnold.

Judge Arnold is one of those people who never goes back on his word. He has many loyal followers in Sharp County and I know he will be missed as a wonderful public servant. On September 19, Judge Arnold will be joined by family, friends, and community members in honoring him and thanking him for the many contributions he has made to the community and I am sure will continue to make. Judge Arnold, I wish you the best. I am proud to call you my friend.